



# DHS Matters!

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**Volunteers at the carnival:** (back row from left) District manager **Bill Holland**, **Sharon Harris**, adult services specialist, **Cory Komusin**, FIS, **Natasha Myles**, ES. Front row from left: **Paul Kowalczyk**, ES, **Rebecca Bandemer**, FIS, **Myra Milton**, FIS, **Andrea Stewart**, FIS, **Latoya Harvey**, FIS, **Teresa Harp**, ES.

## Pontiac staffers continue volunteer tradition in Oakland County

From Billy R. Holland, District Manager  
Oakland DHS Saginaw Street Office  
[HollandB@michigan.gov](mailto:HollandB@michigan.gov)

Ten members of the Oakland DHS Saginaw Street Office (District IV) paused for a group picture after two hours of volunteer work at the Kennedy Center Carnival. Kennedy Center is a special education school in the Pontiac School District.

Oakland County District I staff adopted Kennedy Center in October 1999 and staff regularly used school leave to assist teachers and staff with a variety of children's activities. Now that many of the former District I staff have been transplanted into the District IV office, the trend of volunteering continues.

On the day of the carnival, District IV staff worked at a variety of children's activities including the snow cone machine, ring toss, popcorn maker, making temporary tattoos, dunk tank and bubble machine. All staff agreed that it was very spiritually uplifting to see the children having so much fun.

## Convicted of 1<sup>ST</sup> Degree CSC



**Marc LaForest** of Allegan County DHS was arrested and convicted on Aug. 9 of 1<sup>st</sup> Degree **Cheerfully Supporting Children (CSC)** for "Jerry's Kids." Marc and two of his coworkers – **Deb Belden** and **Lois Killgore** – collected over \$400 for the Muscular Dystrophy Association. Hats off to you!

– from **Susan M. Bailey-Carman**

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## Jackson DHS staff keep on giving

From Tanda Reynolds, Director  
Jackson County DHS, Jackson  
[ReynoldsT@michigan.gov](mailto:ReynoldsT@michigan.gov)

On Aug. 5 the Jackson County DHS Relay for Life Team contributed over \$4,000 in the fight against cancer. The team leaders are current and retired Jackson DHS employees and include (left to right above) **Karla Smith** (FIS), **Judy Bell** (ES), retirees **Carol "Susie" Fisk** and **Annie Lambrecht** and **Kael Meyer** (FIS, not pictured).

Annie Lambrecht and Susie Fisk retired from DHS nearly four years ago and continue to come back to participate as relay team leaders. Karla Smith and Judy Bell again have demonstrated their willingness to give time and energy to a cause. They were both part of the DHS team who went to Alabama to assist hurricane Katrina victims.

The Jackson County DHS Relay for Life Team has celebrated 11 years of giving under the leadership of these exceptional women. They raise funds all year long through casual days, office pop can collection and other fund-raising activities. They want to give special thanks to the Jackson staff that supported the Relay for Life efforts throughout the year.



Cass County DHS eligibility specialist **Karee McGrew** presents the American Flag to Cass DHS director **Chris Kadulski**. Karee has been deployed with the 363rd Personnel Service Detachment Unit stationed in Lansing. She has been deployed with 48 other soldiers. This is Karee's third deployment since she has been employed with DHS. She has 20 years' service with Michigan National Guard. The unit's First Sergeant is SFC Vincent Williams and Senior Personnel Sergeant is SFC Michelle Waits. The unit will be at their deployment station for about 60 days to train up before continuing over seas. The Cass County office would like to thank Karee McGrew for being our heroine and for the service she provides for our country.  
-- from **Sheila Beaty**



Oakland County foster care specialist **Angela Forney** (second from the left) worked with foster care graduating seniors and helped plan the June 28 event that honored the graduates.

## Oakland County recognizes foster care graduating seniors

Lynn Contreras, Community Resource Coordinator

Oakland County DHS, Bloomfield Hills

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Oakland County had 17 foster care teens graduate from high school this past June. High school graduation marks an exciting and important milestone in life and is especially memorable for these teens whose journey in life has thus far not been an easy one. For those reasons, staff felt these graduates needed to be honored.

The graduation party took place June 28 at the Oakland County Baldwin Avenue office (District V). The event was funded by the Strong Families Safe Children Fund and the Youth in Transition fund.

During the event graduates heard inspiring words of encouragement from **Pamela Barckholtz**, Strong Families/Safe Children coordinator, and District V manager **Mel Kaufman**. The graduates received a letter of acknowledgement from Oakland County director **Margaret Warner** and **Gino Gonzalez**, Oakland County deputy director for children's welfare.

Workers that had a graduating senior on their caseload planned the celebration event along with other Oakland County District V staffers. This event was not only important in honoring the hard work, dedication and perseverance of the graduates, but was also important in recognizing the hard work and dedication of their respective caseworkers. There was much to be proud of and to celebrate.

**Date:** July 18

**To:** Marianne Udow, Director  
Michigan Department of Human Services, Lansing

**Subj:** Karen Golejewski

Please allow me a few moments of your time to discuss the performance of one of your employees, Karen Golejewski, customer service manager within the Michigan Department of Human Services.

As you know, my office has regular contact with numerous state employees and departments as we try to assist constituents. We have found Karen to be one of the most helpful contacts we have in any state department and wanted to bring this to your attention. Karen is an exceptional employee that should be commended for her

Your letters,  
intercepted  
and otherwise



commitment to her job and work ethic, She is a true professional, keeping everything operating smoothly and coping with crises without ever losing “her cool”. She is hardworking and always willing to shoulder a little extra responsibility or lend a hand in any circumstance. She has been an invaluable resource to our legislative office, She is always calm and always charming - even on the phone, you can hear the smile in her voice.

I know that letters of complaint usually outnumber those of thanks and commendation, but we are grateful for Karen's helpfulness and dedication and wanted to make sure you knew. Our legislative responsibilities would be much more difficult without such dedicated individuals who are willing to devote their careers to serving Michigan's citizens.

Please feel free to share this letter with Karen and let her know how much we appreciate her assistance to our office when we call or write with constituent issues. She is truly a remarkable employee who deserves praise.

**Glenn S. Anderson**, Michigan State Representative

18th District, Westland

■ *Karen Golejewski is manager of the DHS Customer Service Unit in Lansing that responds to client and legislative inquiries.*

**Date:** July 11

**To:** **William J. Johnson**, MCI Superintendent  
DHS Adoption Services Division, Lansing

**Subj:** Thanks

Far too often we either forget or do not make time to formally thank those who assist and support our efforts pertaining to the children entrusted to our care. As I do not want this to be one of those times, please accept this letter as thanks and appreciation on behalf of Spectrum for your continued assistance and especially the prompt execution of consent for permanent ward (name withheld) as well as for your general positive regard for “our children” and their best interest.

As you know (name withheld) is a medically fragile youth whose long time foster parents had begun to pursue adoption of him after having cared for him for over 10 years. However, shortly after the foster parents began the adoption pursuit, (name withheld) medical issues took a downward spin. He was hospitalized and subsequently sent home with hospice services. Thereafter, Spectrum, on behalf of (him) and his foster parents/prospective adoptive family — as they feared (he) may succumb to his health issues — put forth efforts to expedite his adoption. Thanks to your assistance and those of the Wayne County Court, (his) adoption was finalized in June. (He) continues to be a fighter, as does his adoptive family.

Your personal concern and involvement with (him) and his adoptive parents (in the past and most recently) is much appreciated. Not just because you paid extra attention to this one child, but also because you have provided such attention to detail and the big picture pertaining to other children under Spectrum's supervision.

For instance, most recently two siblings in connection to a fictive kin and an elderly foster parent; and, in the past, a siblings group related to an unusual out of state relative. These are all children for whom you and your staff spent a great deal of time with us, exploring and examining issues. The time you spent with regards to these children was not just over the phone, but in person as well. All of which, given the enormous tasks you and your staff have related to the children under your authority, confirms your dedication and goes beyond the norm.

It is not often that administrators or authority figures will take the time to appreciate the full story and see the faces of those we seek to protect. You have and you continue to do so. (Name withheld) and the few mentioned above are just minute samples of the children you have shown needed special attention to.

However, your noted involvement is also a prime example of your commitment, devotion, compassion, and empathy to and for the wellbeing of the thousands of children who reside in the “system”. Surely these characteristics coupled with your personable professional style, knowledge of systems, policies, and of children and families, are assets to your credit and to the MCI office.

Once again thanks to you and your staff for all that you do.

**Lonia Perry**

Associate Director of Adoptions

Spectrum Health Services Inc.

Westland

■ *As Michigan Children's Institute director, Bill Johnson is the temporary legal parent of DHS wards seeking adoptive placement.*

**DHS Matters!** is a product of Michigan's Department of Human Services  
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